

Serial No. 09/184,553
Amdt. Dated 03/24/2005
Reply to Office Action
Mail 09/10/1999

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the specification as follows.

Replace the paragraph bridging Pages 2 and 3 with the following amended paragraph:

a1 By connecting the center differential and the input gear, the former may be moved towards the transmission against the first tapered roller bearing seated in the wall of the housing and thus create more space near the engine without enlarging the existing housing. The output member may extend into the space, and the output gear may be arranged there. In this connection, it is important, for purposes of the dimensions of the gearing, to provide sufficient space in the axial direction. Sufficient space results from journalling the cage in the output gear. Thus, even at a very small space of the first driven axle from the engine housing, sufficient space remains in the transverse direction towards the clutch housing, so that the diameter of the output gear may remain large. Thus, the distance between the bearings supporting the cage is also short, and the unit is correspondingly rigid ~~which~~. This is advantageous as regards both service life and operating noise level. In addition, significant axial forces can be absorbed so that it is possible to structure the output gear ~~may be formed~~ with a large helix angle or even as a bevel gear.

Page 3, replace the second complete paragraph and the paragraph bridging Pages 3 and 4 with the following amended paragraphs:

In an advantageous embodiment of the invention and depending upon structural conditions, the output gear may be

additionally supported in the housing by an auxiliary bearing. Since the forces acting on the gear are low and free of any axial component, a light roller or needle bearing is ~~sufficient~~ adequate for this purpose.

62 In a preferred embodiment, the center differential is a unique structure. It is provided with first and second planetary gear trains, the first planetary gear train being provided with a planet carrier and planet gears rigidly connected to the cage, a sun gear connected to one half-shaft of the first driven axle and with an internal gear. The second planetary gear train is provided with an internal gear rigidly connected to the internal gear of the first planetary gear train, a sun gear connected to the other half-shaft of the first driven axle as well as with a planet carrier which constitutes the further output member and which is provided with two planetary gears meshing with each other. Such structure allows incorporating the function of an axle differential for the first driven axle into the center differential while at the same time significantly reducing the axial dimension of the center differential. The axial space required by a center differential structured in this manner is smaller than the bevel gear axle differentials used in a conventional vehicles with only one driven axle.

Page 4, replace the second complete paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

63 The novel features which are considered to be characteristic of the invention are set forth with particularity

in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, in respect of its structure, construction and lay-out, as well as manufacturing techniques, together with other objects and advantages thereof, will best be understood from the following description of preferred ~~embodiment~~ embodiments when read with reference to the appended drawings, in which:

Page 5, replace the first and second paragraphs with the following amended paragraphs:

In Fig. 1, reference numeral 1 designates an engine, and 1a denotes the contour of the engine which is critical to the spatial conditions. A gear shift transmission is schematically shown at 2, and the ~~connected~~ housing of the drive unit connected therewith is shown at 3. A An output pinion 4 of the transmission 2 drives an input gear 5 of the drive unit. The input gear 5 is rigidly connected to a center differential 6. The center differential will be seen to have a center axis 7 which also constitutes the center axis of the input gear 5 as well as of the left and right half-shafts 8 and 9 of a first driven axle. An output gear 10 for driving ~~the~~ a second driven axle is driven by the center differential 6. The output gear 10 meshes with a spur gear 11 which is connected to an intermediate shaft 12, and a bevel gear 13 also connected to the shaft 12 in turn drives a further bevel gear 14 mounted on a shaft 15 for driving a the second axle (not shown).

The center differential 6 is shown on an enlarged scale in Fig. 2. The differential 6 is encased by a cage 20. The cage 20 may be divided and is rigidly connected to the input gear 5.

ay
At both of its ends, the cage 20 forms bearing sleeves 21, 22, the arrangement being such that the input gear 5 is closer to the right bearing sleeve 22 than it is to the left sleeve 21. First and second planetary gear trains 23 and 24 are accommodated within the cage 20. The first planetary gear train 23 consists of a planet carrier constituted by the cage 20, planet gears 25, a sun gear 26 drivingly connected to the left half-shaft 8 of the first driven axle and an internal gear 27 which is freely rotatable within the cage 20. The second planetary gear train 24 consists of a planet carrier 28, first and second planet gears 29 and 30, with a first planet gear always meshing with a second planet gear, and of a sun gear 31 connected to the right half-shaft 9 of the first driven axle. The first planet gears 29 mesh with the internal gear 27. The internal gear 27 is shared by the first and second planetary gear trains 23 and 24. The second planet gears 30 mesh with the sun gear 31.

Page 6, replace the first, second and third paragraphs with the following amended paragraphs:

as
The planet carrier 28 of the second planetary gear train 24 is provided with an axial hollow shaft 32 protruding ~~out of~~ from the second bearing sleeve 22 of the cage 20. The hollow shaft 32 is splined at 33 to the spur gear 10.

At one of its end, the cage 20 of the center differential 6 is journalled in a tapered roller bearing 35 seated in the housing 3. At its opposite end, the cage 20, by way of the second bearing sleeve 22, is journalled in a third tapered

roller bearing 37 seated in an axial recess ~~in~~ of the output gear 10. The output gear 10 is in turn journalled in a second tapered roller bearing 36 seated in the housing 3 and, ~~if~~ desired optionally, in an additional small support bearing 39. In Fig. 1, the small support bearing 39 has been shown as a needle bearing. Alternatively, it could be supported in the cage 20. The second and third tapered roller bearings 36 and 37 are disposed such that the apex of their pressure cones ~~have the same~~ lies at point 38 on the axis 7.

as
cont
The embodiment of Fig. 3 is distinct from that of Fig. 1 in that the output gear ~~40~~ 10 of Figs. 1 and 2 is structured as a bevel gear 40 meshing with a further bevel gear 41 mounted on the shaft 15 for driving the second axle (not shown). Such a structure is possible because the bearing support of the bevel gear 40 is capable of absorbing large axial forces.
